



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/024,677	12/18/2001	Gil Sharon	LUZZATTO 3.9-061 CONT CON	4306
530	7590	05/10/2004	EXAMINER	
LERNER, DAVID, LITTENBERG, KRUMHOLZ & MENTLIK 600 SOUTH AVENUE WEST WESTFIELD, NJ 07090			SISSON, BRADLEY L	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1634	

DATE MAILED: 05/10/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

314

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/024,677

Applicant(s)

SHARON, GIL

Examiner

Bradley L. Sisson

Art Unit

1634

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 December 2001 and 14 March 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3/14/02 &amp; 4/8/02</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Response to Amendment***

1. Acknowledgement is made of applicant having filed a preliminary amendment on even date with the application whereby claims 2-9 were canceled. The amendment contained the statement: "Applicant will be submitting new claims in due course." A review of the application fails to locate any new claims. Accordingly, only claim 1 is pending and has been examined on the merits.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

2. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

3. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter, which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Attention is directed to the decision in *University of Rochester v. G.D. Searle & Co.* 68 USPQ2D

1424 (Fed. Cir. 2004) at 1428:

---

To satisfy the written-description requirement, the specification must describe every element of the claimed invention in sufficient detail so that one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that the inventor possessed the claimed invention at the time of filing. *Vas-Cath*, 935 F.3d at 1563; see also *Lockwood v. American Airlines, Inc.*, 107

Art Unit: 1634

F.3d 1565, 1572 [41 USPQ2d 1961] (Fed. Cir. 1997) (patent specification must describe an invention and do so in sufficient detail that one skilled in the art can clearly conclude that “the inventor invented the claimed invention”); In re Gosteli, 872 F.2d 1008, 1012 [10 USPQ2d 1614] (Fed. Cir. 1989) (“the description must clearly allow persons of ordinary skill in the art to recognize that [the inventor] invented what is claimed”). Thus, an applicant complies with the written-description requirement “by describing the invention, with all its claimed limitations, not that which makes it obvious,” and by using “such descriptive means as words, structures, figures, diagrams, formulas, etc., that set forth the claimed invention.” Lockwood, 107 F.3d at 1572.

4. For convenience, claim 1 is reproduced below.

1. A method for assembling two or more DNA fragments with high efficiency, comprising:

a) providing, for each DNA fragment, at least one protruding terminus, or “overhang”, capable of hydrogen bonding to a complementary sequence on at least one strand of a second DNA fragment, said overhang and said complementary sequence having at least 15 bases; and

b) mixing two or more said DNA fragments under conditions suitable to promote joining thereof.

5. For purposes of examination, claim 1 has been interpreted as encompassing a duplex structure that has but one nucleotide in duplex conformation and also comprises an infinite number of nucleotides in single-stranded conformation. A review of the disclosure fails to find adequate support for where any DNA fragment comprises an infinite number of nucleotides, be they single-stranded or double stranded. A review of the specification finds support for the claimed method where the overhang ranges from 12 to 21. However, at page 6 of the disclosure the specification teaches that while 12-base overhangs were used, they exhibited “close to 0%” tendency to connect with their complementary strand. Accordingly, the specification does not provide an adequate written description of the full scope of that which is claimed. The specification also does not reasonably suggest that applicant had possession of the claimed invention at the time of filing.

Art Unit: 1634

6. Accordingly, and in the absence of convincing evidence to the contrary, claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement.

7. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

8. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

9. The term "high" in claim 1 is a relative term, which renders the claim indefinite. The term "high" is not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention.

10. Claim 1 is confusing as it refers to "a second DNA fragment" without having identified a "first" DNA fragment.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

11. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

---

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Art Unit: 1634

12. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent 5,340,728 (Grosz et al.).

13. Grosz et al., disclose a method of performing nested polymerase chain reaction (PCR). In short, one set of primers (outer primers) amplifies a sequence of a first length. A second set of primers (inner primers) is then used to anneal to a sequence internal of the previously amplified sequence. When the second set of primers anneal to their template, they have created a DNA fragment that has an overhang of at least 15 bases. Also, the reaction mixture comprises a second DNA fragment that is capable of annealing to the overhang of the first DNA fragment. Given that the conditions permit primers to anneal, the method of Grosz et al., fairly teaches mixing the two or more DNA fragments under conditions suitable to promote joining thereof.

14. Grosz et al., column 24, teaches using multiple sets of primers that anneal in a nested format, and also refer one to Figure 11C, which clearly teaches the production of fragments that are several hundred nucleotides shorter than the first DNA fragment. The difference in sizes speaks to the size of the overhang when an inner primer was annealed to a template produced by the outer primers.

15. For the above reasons, and in the absence of convincing evidence to the contrary, claim 1 is rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent 5,340,728 (Grosz et al.).

### ***Double Patenting***

16. ~~The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686~~

Art Unit: 1634

F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

17. A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

18. Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

19. Claim 1 is rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-21 of U.S. Patent No. 6,372,429B1. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they are both drawn to a method for assembling a plurality of DNA fragments.

### *Conclusion*

20. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Bradley L. Sisson whose telephone number is (571) 272-0751. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

21. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gary Benzion can be reached on (571) 272-0782. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

22. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR

Art Unit: 1634

system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Bradley L. Sisson  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 1634

BLS  
05 May 2004